

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



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**2013 ALEUTIAN ISLANDS DISTRICT STATE-WATERS PACIFIC COD
GUIDELINE HARVEST LEVEL AND FISHERY OPENING ANNOUNCED**

The 2013 guideline harvest level (GHL) for the Aleutian Islands District state-waters Pacific cod fishery is 20,304,366 pounds. The GHL is apportioned for a maximum of 70 percent in the A season (prior to June 10), and 30 percent for the B season (beginning June 10). Unharvested A season GHL will rollover to the B season; however, the B season GHL may not exceed 70 percent of the total fishery GHL.

		GHL (pounds)
A Season	prior to June 10	14,213,056
B Season	beginning June 10	6,091,310
TOTAL:		20,304,366

Beginning January 1, 2013 the Aleutian Islands District state-waters Pacific cod fishery will open between 175° W long. and 178° W long. to vessels 60 feet overall length (OAL) or less using trawl, pot, and jig gear, and vessels 58 feet OAL or less using longline gear. During a state-waters Pacific cod fishery, the Steller sea lion Reasonable and Prudent Alternatives implemented by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) prior to January 1, 2011 will be in effect. These closures are located in Table 5 to 50 CFR part 679 (69 FR 75865, December 20, 2004), posted on the NMFS website at <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/frules/fr75865.pdf> and Table 12 to 50 CFR part 679 updated through January 2011, and posted on the NMFS website at <http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/regs/default.htm>.

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Excluding waters from 175° W long. to 178° W long., all other state waters west of 170° W long. will initially be managed under parallel Pacific cod rules with Steller sea lion protection measures consistent with the Reasonable and Prudent Alternatives issued by NMFS effective January 1, 2011. These closures are located in Table 5 to 50 CFR part 679 posted on the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) web site at <http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/regs/default.htm> or available from NMFS offices in Alaska. Opening of the state-waters Pacific cod fishery east of 175° W long. and west of 178° W long. will be announced in a subsequent news release.

Beginning January 1, 2013, the National Marine Fisheries Service will implement a new fisheries observer program for Alaska's federal commercial groundfish and halibut fisheries. The new Observer Program will change how observers are deployed, how observer coverage is funded, and modifies the pool of vessels and processors that must have some or all of their operations observed. Vessel operators participating in directed halibut, state-water parallel, and guideline harvest level (GHL) groundfish fisheries are encouraged to become familiar with how they may be affected by this new federal program. Information and frequently asked questions on the restructured observer program are available on the National Marine Fisheries Service website at: <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/observers/> or by contacting the Observer Program office in Seattle at: (206) 526-4195 or (206) 526-4194.

The Aleutian Islands coral garden protection areas and Aleutian Islands habitat conservation area closures are in effect during both the parallel season and state-waters season.

Vessel operators transitioning between the state-waters Pacific cod fishery and a federal or parallel fishery must deliver all Pacific cod on board prior to participating in or exiting the Aleutian Islands District state-waters Pacific cod fishery. Additionally, vessels must notify the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) in Dutch Harbor prior to entering or exiting the state-waters fishery. Vessel operators can contact ADF&G in Dutch Harbor by telephone at (907) 581-1239 or via e-mail at charles.trebesch@alaska.gov.

The state-waters Pacific cod fishery in the Aleutian Islands District is a non-exclusive vessel registration area. Vessels must register for the fishery with ADF&G prior to participating. Vessel operators are required to obtain an interim-use permit card for miscellaneous finfish from the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission before vessel registration.

The daily harvest limit of Pacific cod in the state-waters season for each vessel is 150,000 pounds round weight, with a maximum of 150,000 pounds of unprocessed Pacific cod on board the vessel at any time. A person may not have more processed fish on board the vessel than the round weight equivalent of fish reported on ADF&G fish tickets during the Aleutian Islands state-waters Pacific cod season. All Pacific cod caught must be retained, and any overage must be immediately reported to the department, with proceeds from the overage forfeited to the state. Enforcement action against vessel operators who incur overages of the daily or trip limit will be vigorously pursued.

For more information, contact the ADF&G in Dutch Harbor at (907) 581-1239.

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